

reckless canoe trip down the Connecticut River in New Hampshire.

While on a campaign swing through the first-in-the-Nation primary State, the VP decided to demonstrate his environmental prowess for the cameras by floating four miles downstream and then climbing ashore with a \$100,000 Federal grant check for the local water commission.

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Unfortunately, GORE and his handlers determined too late the low water level on the river might not fully float GORE's boat, thereby presenting a potentially embarrassing political moment to the campaign flotilla. Rather than forgo the photo opportunity, the local water commission, yes, the same group that received the check, was persuaded to release 4 billion gallons of captured water down the river for the 35 minutes GORE was afloat. Water usage cost to release the 4 billion gallons: \$7.1 million.

This was not the first time. They did the same thing in Colorado in 1996 at the Chatfield Reservoir. In either case while farmers pay a premium for reliable water supplies, the Vice President spends their money like water.

Mr. Speaker, as they say over in the White House, "Whatever makes your boat float."

#### REJECT THE MASSIVELY IRRESPONSIBLE REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on this Congress to reverse course and pass fiscally responsible legislation to provide targeted tax relief for America's families.

Mr. Speaker, the people of North Carolina sent me to this House to work to put our Nation's fiscal house in order, honor our values and invest in our future. Last Congress, I proudly voted to balance the Federal budget for the first time in a generation and I continue to support fiscally responsible tax relief for middle-class families.

But the tax bill the Republican leadership rammed through this House last week is a massively irresponsible gamble with our Nation's future and our economic prosperity. The Republican bill would cripple our ability to save Social Security and Medicare for our Nation's seniors and would prevent us from making needed investments in better education for our children.

Mr. Speaker, the first bill I introduced as a Member of this House cut the inheritance tax for small businesses and small families. This year I have written and introduced, cosponsored by 90 Members, a bill to provide Federal tax credits for local school

construction. I strongly support paying down the national debt and providing responsible tax relief for our families. The Republican bill would hurt the middle class and return us to the days of out-of-control deficits and skyrocketing inflation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF KOSOVO BURDENSARING RESOLUTION

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member is today introducing a House Resolution titled the Kosovo Burdensaring Resolution. Since the United States bore the disproportionately large share of the cost of the air war against Yugoslavia, my resolution expresses the sense of the House that the United States should pay no more than 18 percent of the aggregate total costs associated with the military air operations, reconstruction in Kosovo, and in Yugoslavia when Milosevic no longer controls the governments of Serbia or Yugoslavia or the Socialist Party, except there is no limitation against Montenegro. This limitation on burdensaring is consistent with the earlier statements by the President, but we need to remind him and reinforce his bargaining power on burdensaring when he negotiates with the European and other allied countries.

This resolution is particularly timely as President Clinton leaves today for the Balkans Reconstruction Conference on Friday in Sarajevo. The resolution also recognizes that Macedonia and Albania bore a significant economic and refugee burden and that these roles should make them priority recipients of aid.

Members should contact my office today if they wish to be an original cosponsor.

#### MANAGED CARE REFORM

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have a saying in Texas, "If it's not broke, don't fix it." Well, our health care delivery system by HMOs is broken.

According to the day if you read almost any newspaper, the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 87 percent of doctors said their patients had experienced denial of coverage over the last 2 years; 79 percent had trouble getting approval for a certain drug they wanted to prescribe; 69 percent had trouble getting a diagnostic test approved; 52 percent had trouble getting patients referred to a specialist.

And now to bring you up to date, the Republican leadership announced their intention once again to bypass the committee process and take a managed care bill directly here to the floor.

Once again they are starting down a road that ignores the American people. They are letting the HMOs write their own legislation. Once again they are writing a major piece of legislation in the Speaker's office without bipartisan support.

Another Texas saying we have, and I think it applies, is that they are letting the fox guard the chicken house. What we need is real HMO reform, not a fake or a fig leaf.

#### ADMINISTRATION FALLS SHORT ON VA FUNDING

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration proposed a dismal VA medical care budget earlier this year. It is shortchanging our veterans.

We have heard from VA officials that an additional \$1.1 billion is needed just to maintain current service levels.

Deep concerns regarding the administration's proposal for veterans' medical care led our Committee on Veterans' Affairs to call for an additional \$1.7 billion in funding for the upcoming fiscal year. The new funding being suggested by the Vice President over the weekend will not cover the needs of our veterans.

He proposed an additional \$900 million for medical care. But based upon the administration's own figures, the cost for pay increases and inflation alone will cost \$900 million.

The administration's budget fails to cover the costs of treating hepatitis C, a "silent epidemic" afflicting many veterans, and fails to cover the cost of emergency care.

Mr. Speaker, we need to provide for our veterans. It is a moral obligation.

#### SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY FIRST

(Ms. SANCHEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Social Security is the primary retirement system for the majority of retired Americans. It provides benefits to 33 million Americans of all ages and it keeps 12 million of them out of poverty.

The GOP Social Security approach is really an unreliable response that supports wealthy special interests. Why does the GOP want to undercut a sound economy with a tax scheme designed to benefit the few?

We must protect Social Security. This means less debt, lower interest costs, rising living standards, more money made available for seniors' priorities, and more security for Social Security.

The Republican tax cuts mean higher deficits, higher interest rates and lower

economic growth. Their tax scheme would make it impossible to continue to pay down and eventually eliminate the debt we have by 2015 as proposed by our President.

My colleagues across the aisle would have us believe that their efforts are to support Social Security, but this is not so. Their tax cut does not cut it.

#### REPUBLICANS PUT PRIORITY ON SAVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I would begin by reminding my friend from California that the Democrats controlled this Chamber for 40 years, and in that 40-year period, they put not one penny into the Social Security trust fund. They used the Social Security trust fund for government spending programs.

Now, for the first time in 40 years, Republicans are in control of the Chamber. We campaigned on a tax cut for working families after we protected Social Security, after we protected Medicare. Because of Republican spending priorities, we now have for the first time since Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon a surplus economy. That did not come from liberal profligate spending. That came from Republican proposals that put a priority on Social Security, put a priority on Medicare, put a priority on jobs and put a priority on protecting the paychecks of working families in this country.

That is what Americans voted for in 1994, in 1996 and 1998. As we approach the year 2000, Mr. Speaker, we are going to give them that opportunity again.

#### CHINA

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago, the Communist Chinese government once again had its way with this Congress when this body voted trading privileges for perhaps the most repressive, corrupt regime in the world. American CEOs and Washington attorneys again had their way with Congress even though we have a trade deficit with China of \$65 billion and growing annually.

Beijing and its Communist Party leaders again had their way with this Congress this week even though this Communist Chinese government supports forced abortions, persecution of Christians and Muslims, sale of nuclear technology to Pakistan, child labor and slave labor.

But there was good news, Mr. Speaker, in the vote this week. The vote was

closer than it had been in many, many years. Members of this body are beginning to understand and beginning to show that they care about human rights, care about nuclear proliferation, and care about democracy in China.

All of us need to demand that China enter the family of nations before they enter the World Trade Organization.

#### WICHITA NAMED ALL-AMERICAN CITY

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, some people think all the wise and good people are inside the Washington Beltway, but, of course, that is not right as each and every day ordinary people in communities all across this great Nation join together to do extraordinary things.

The City of Wichita, Kansas, led by its outstanding mayor and my friend, Bob Knight, was recently named an All-American City by the National Civic League. This is a great honor and one worthy of mention here on the floor of the People's House.

The three programs the city of Wichita submitted in its winning All-American City application are Wichita's Promise: The Alliance for Youth; Wichita Independent Neighborhoods; and the Cessna 21st Street Learning and Work Campus.

These programs are volunteer driven and do the hard work and sometimes thankless work of making our Nation better by making our communities better, one at a time. I want to publicly thank everyone associated with each of these organizations because, thanks to you, Wichita is an All-American City and America is a better place to live.

#### SALUTE TO LANCE ARMSTRONG, WINNER OF TOUR DE FRANCE

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we have again seen the face of courage. It is Lance Armstrong's.

Lying in his hospital bed just 3 years ago, Mr. Armstrong was fired by his French bicycle racing team. He suffered from testicular cancer and was given less than a 40 percent chance of survival.

He underwent two operations and 12 weeks of chemotherapy, but he refused to succumb and now has prevailed by winning the Tour de France last Sunday.

Lance Armstrong was not alone on this long journey back. The one team willing to take a chance on Mr. Armstrong was sponsored by the United

States Postal Service. The Postal Service deserves great credit.

This wonderful story reminds me of a poem by another American trailblazer, Amelia Earhart. She wrote:

Courage is the price that life extracts for granting peace.

The soul that knows it not knows no release from little things;

knows not the livid loneliness of fear, nor mountain heights where bitter joy can hear the sounds of wings.

Lance Armstrong knows both and inspires us all.

#### AGRICULTURE CRISIS

(Mr. EWING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, there is an ag crisis. The cause is excessive world production and lost markets that we counted on. The result has been reduced exports and disastrously low commodity prices.

Can the great economic engine of America continue to move on and up with the enormous agricultural engine pulling the other way? I doubt it.

On this issue, Congress has acted and must act again. We have done things to open new markets: The NTR vote this week, anti-embargo legislation which we passed in this House, unilateral sanction reform, tax reform, capital gains, estate tax, which are good for our farmers.

But when we come back from the recess, we are going to have to take up, if we have not already passed, the crop insurance reform bill, and we are going to have to deal with emergency lost market payments and adequate financing for our American farmers. Let us not forget this enormous part of our agricultural economy.

#### REPUBLICAN TAX BILL OUT OF STEP WITH AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, we have a projected Federal surplus, the first in three decades. We must be responsible. We must use that surplus so that it reflects our values as a people and as a Nation. Sadly, the Republican leadership would rather give whopping tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans.

Instead of reasonable tax relief targeted to working, middle-class families, the House Republican leadership passed a scheme that gives 65 percent of the benefit to the top 10 percent of Americans. Their plan does nothing to extend Social Security by a single day. It dedicates not one penny to strengthening Medicare. It forces deep cuts in education, crime fighting and national